

Response filed December 6, 2011

Reply to OA dated September 9, 2011

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 10-16 without prejudice or disclaimer, and amend claims 1 and 6, as follows. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A method for enhancing the emulsification ability of gum arabic comprising a step of making unheated gum arabic into an aqueous solution with pH 4.5 to 6, and a step of maintaining the thus-obtained aqueous solution at below 60 °C.

Claim 2 (Previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the concentration of the aqueous gum arabic solution is not higher than 50 mass %.

Claim 3 (Previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the concentration of the aqueous gum arabic solution is 10 to 30 mass %.

Claim 4 (Previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the temperature at which the aqueous gum arabic solution is maintained is 5 to 40 °C.

Claim 5 (Previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the time for which the aqueous solution is maintained at below 60 °C is at least 6 hours.

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Claim 6 (Currently amended): The method according to claim 1, wherein ~~the pH of the aqueous solution is 4.5 to 6~~ and the time for which the aqueous solution is maintained at below 60 °C is at least 3 hours.

Claim 7 (Previously presented): The method according to claim 1 which comprises a step of making unheated gum arabic into an aqueous solution under temperature conditions of below 60 °C.

Claim 8 (Previously presented): The method according to claim 7, wherein the temperature conditions are within the range of from 10 to 50 °C.

Claim 9-16 (Canceled).